United Nations A/54/448

General Assembly

Distr.: General
7 October 1999

Original: English and Spanish

Fifty-fourth session
Agenda items 20, 35, 37, 76, 78, 84, 85, 99, 100, 107, 108, 109, 114, 116 and 160

Strengthening of the coordination of humanitarian and disaster relief assistance of the United Nations, including special economic assistance

Assistance in mine action

Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development

General and complete disarmament

Review of the implementation of the recommendations and decisions adopted by the General Assembly at its tenth special session

Review of the implementation of the Declaration on the Strengthening of International Security

Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty

Sustainable development and international economic cooperation

Environment and sustainable development

Crime prevention and criminal justice

International drug control

Advancement of women

Elimination of racism and racial discrimination

Human rights questions

Measures to eliminate international terrorism

Letter dated 29 September 1999 from the Permanent Representatives of Brazil, Finland and Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

We have the honour to transmit herewith the text of the "Declaration of Rio de Janeiro", as well as the document "Priorities for action", adopted during the first Summit of the Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, held in Rio de Janeiro on 28 and 29 June 1999 (see annex).

99-29227 (E) 251099

We would appreciate that you have the text of the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 20, 35, 37, 76, 78, 84, 85, 99, 100, 107, 108, 109, 114, 116 and 160 of the agenda of the fifty-fourth session.

(*Signed*) Gelson **Fonseca**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Brazil
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Marjatta **Rasi**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Finland
to the United Nations

(*Signed*) Manuel **Tello**
Ambassador, Permanent Representative of Mexico
to the United Nations

Annex

"Declaration of Rio de Janeiro" and "Priorities for Action", adopted during the first Summit of Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, held in Rio de Janeiro on 28 and 29 June 1999

We, the Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and of the European Union, meeting in the city of Rio de Janeiro on 28th and 29th June, 1999, have decided to advance in the consolidation of a strategic partnership of a political, economic, cultural and social and co-operative character between both regions which contributes towards the development of each of our countries, as well as towards the achievement of better levels of social and economic well-being for our peoples, taking advantage of the opportunities offered by an ever more globalised world, in a spirit of equality, respect, alliance and co-operation.

We agree that the priorities for action are based on a common commitment to representative democracy, the rule of law, good governance, pluralism and social development including a more equitable distribution of wealth and opportunities and to a harmonious integration into the global economy.

We have therefore decided to strengthen the dialogue between governments at all levels and with organisations from the civil society, with the aim of ensuring the achievement of the objectives of development and strengthening the rule of law in both regions. In this context, we will strengthen mechanisms to guarantee the fulfilment of the laws of both regions, as well as transparency and accountability, especially in the use of public resources.

We have also decided that the Biregional Group, at the level of Senior Officials, established by the Declaration of Rio de Janeiro, will monitor the actions contained in this document.

Taking this into account, as well as the principles and commitments contained in the Declaration of Rio de Janeiro, we will promote the following:

PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

In the political field:

1. Promote closer co-operation and exchange of points of view in international fora on matters of common interest. Work jointly for the improvement of the capability of the United Nations Organisation to respond in an ever more effective manner to its tasks in the new millennium, with full respect for the objectives and principles of the Charter, and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations 50 years ago. We will co-ordinate biregional efforts to guarantee that the Millennium Assembly develops in such a way that the Organisation is strengthened.

2. Formulate programmes of co-operation aimed at further strengthening the protection and promotion of human rights, as well as training programmes to support offices and institutions for human rights, such as those involved in protecting the rights of the more vulnerable groups of society. We support specific training programmes aiming to promote tangible steps forward in this field. Likewise, we will promote programmes to disseminate humanitarian law.

3. Design and put into practice joint programmes and adopt national measures to prevent and combat xenophobia, manifestations of racism and other related forms of intolerance, as well as to promote and protect the rights of the most vulnerable groups of society, especially children, youth, disabled persons, indigenous peoples and migrant workers and their families.

4. Adopt programmes and projects in the twelve priority areas identified in the Fourth World Conference of Women (Beijing, 1995), through mechanisms of financial and technical co-operation, with prior identification of actions of common interest with a biregional dimension. The gender aspect will be taken into account as a basis for all co-operation programmes.

5. Work towards the modernisation of the structure of our respective States, in particular with regard to electoral systems, the administration of justice, the tax systems and the budgetary policies as mechanisms for the redistribution of wealth and revenues generated by economic development. We encourage dialogue on the matter.

6. Invite actors of civil society to participate in the implementation of joint initiatives between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union. We therefore regard co-operation between the public sector and civil society as positive and recognise the relevant role of decentralised co-operation programmes. We agree to co-operate closely and exchange knowledge and experience in the field of reforming social security.

Encourage parliamentary contacts between both regions.

7. Welcome in particular the activities of various fora in the context of the preparation of the Summit.

8. Recalling the successful conferences on Security and Confidence Building Measures, underline the need to continue regular dialogue on security issues between the European Union and the Rio Group.

9. Promote the signing or ratification of instruments in the field of disarmament and prohibition of certain particularly inhumane weapons, including the conventions on chemical and biological weapons; the Non Proliferation Treaty (NPT), the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty (CTBT). Also, support negotiations currently in progress, in particular in the Conference on Disarmament.

10. Welcome the entry into force, on 1st March 1999, of the Ottawa Convention on the prohibition of use, stockpiling, production and transfer of anti-personnel landmines (APL) and on their destruction and emphasise the importance of full and speedy implementation of the Convention. We call on all States to join efforts to achieve the total elimination of APL world-wide and agree to attach high priority to efforts dealing with the suffering and destruction caused by their use.

11. Continue to provide technical and financial co-operation through mine action programmes, with particular attention to Central American countries.

12. Emphasise the fact that a serious challenge to the international community is raised by the combination of conflicts with the uncontrolled dissemination of small arms. In this context, we welcome the Joint Action of the European Union on combating the destabilising accumulation and spread of small arms and light weapons, as well as the Inter-American Convention to Combat the Illegal Production and Traffic of Firearms, Munitions, Explosives and other Related Materials, and underline our determination to co-operate closely in this field.

13. Co-operate in the fight against transnational organised crime and related criminal activities, work for the elaboration of instruments against corruption, as well as actively promote the implementation of the international conventions on the matter, and also increase collaboration between our governments.

14. Intensify international co-operation to combat terrorism, based on the principles established in the framework of the United Nations Organisation. To this end we will work together to advance in the signing and ratification of the conventions and protocols of the UN and to strengthen the international legal framework on the subject, supporting the elaboration of instruments to fight terrorism.

15. Support projects for the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources, especially those which contribute to overcoming poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion, to modifying patterns of production and consumption, and to promoting the conservation of biological diversity. Special importance will be attached to promoting the sectors likely to generate productive employment.

16. Reaffirm our commitments to implement the Rio Convention on Climate Change, Biodiversity and Desertification and to promote actions oriented towards the early application of the Mechanism for Clean Development foreseen in the Kyoto Protocol. We resolve to co-operate and exchange experience in the field of preserving forests world-wide through sound economic exploitation in line with the principles of sustainable development. Close attention will be paid to projects dealing with a more rational use of energy, the development of renewable energy sources and solving the problems of industrial and urban pollution. We resolve to exchange experiences in the field of soil productivity loss and management of arid ecosystems. We stress the successful co-operation between the European Union and the Brazilian Government in implementing the "International Pilot Programme to Conserve the Brazilian Rain Forests" (PPG7), as a promising strategic alliance. We underline the importance of education on environmental protection for the implementation of Agenda 21 and agree to co-operate closely in this respect.

17. Put into practice programmes of co-operation in the field of environmental and natural disasters, with the aim of contributing to the improvement of the capabilities of the more vulnerable countries of both regions to prevent and respond to disasters; to set up an adequate system to take advantage of international aid for the phases of prevention, early warning, emergency, mitigation, rehabilitation and reconstruction. This co-operation will include the elaboration of a directory of responsible national civil-protection organisations, the integration of an inventory of existing resources for disaster relief, and the drafting of a handbook of guidelines for international co-operation in case of disaster.

18. Promote the complete application of the objectives of the International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction, and of the Programmes for Disaster Preparation, Mitigation and Prevention of the Department of Humanitarian Aid of the European Community (EC DIPECHO), executed in Central America and the Caribbean.

19. Appreciate the active role that civil society is playing for the relief and reconstruction work in Central America, as recognised in the Stockholm Declaration of 28th May 1999.

20. Endorse the implementation envisaged in the Panama Comprehensive Action Plan for European Union/Latin America Counter-Drugs Assistance including interregional co-operation with the Caribbean as an important part of the priorities for action.

21. Welcome the results of the XIV European Union-Latin America interparliamentary Conference (16th–18th March, 1999), in particular the message relating to the Institute for Relations between Europe and Latin America (IRELA), and consider the recommendations of the members of parliament of both regions in this respect.

In the economic field:

22. Promote joint action in international economic co-operation. In the World Trade Organisation, we will ensure the full implementation of the results of the Uruguay Round and agree on the launching of a new comprehensive and mutually beneficial round of multilateral trade negotiations.

23. Strengthen our economic and trade relations, taking maximum advantage of existing trade agreements between our regions and working for the establishment of new ones.

24. Hold high-level consultations to exchange points of view and to agree on positions in multilateral efforts in appropriate fora, including those in the United Nations system, oriented towards the establishment of mechanisms that promote a stable and dynamic global economic and financial system, as a way to prevent crises in the future, and should they occur, to ensure their effective and swift solution.

25. Formulate, in the framework of our consultations, proposals of biregional co-operation directed to strengthening national financial systems and developing mechanisms of monitoring and regulation in order to implement international best standards and practices.

26. Create specific programmes to support economically relatively less-developed countries by establishing training fora and stimulating productive investment and adequate conditions of financing, including effective national and global measures to resolve the problems generated by excessive levels of debt.

27. Call on the business communities of Latin America and the Caribbean and of the European Union to meet periodically in a Business Forum, with the aim of analysing matters of common interest and, where appropriate, presenting conclusions and recommendations for the consideration of governments. Such a Forum, whose starting point could be the promotion of biregional electronic networks of business associations, could be enriched with existing initiatives such as the Mercosur/European Union Business Forum and the Multisectoral Business Encounter AL-Partenariat 99 European Union-Mexico-Central America.

28. Promote a biregional programme of government and business training to foster competitiveness in business and in the negotiating capacity of entrepreneurs, as well as in the search for effective solutions in the area of facilitating business.

29. Encourage the conclusion of bilateral reciprocal investment promotion and protection agreements and conventions to avoid double taxation and to stimulate initiatives directed towards facilitating and increasing investments between both regions.

30. Promote programmes and mechanisms to support small and medium enterprises in the fields of financing, including better access to financial guarantees and risk capital, management training, technology and inter-business co-operation, with the aim of raising competitiveness and achieving better insertion into international markets. In particular, to promote joint ventures for the establishment of enterprises in both regions.

31. Invite the European Investment Bank (EIB) to consider strengthening and broadening its activities in Latin America and the Caribbean and encourage co-financing between European financial institutions and those of Latin America and the Caribbean.

32. Support the development of national capacities to strengthen and protect intellectual-property rights in all fields, in accordance with the rules established in the framework of the WTO, as an important requisite for increasing trade and investment flows.

33. Establish a dialogue to study standards and certifications based on current agreements on Technical Barriers to Trade. We will examine the possibility of preparing negotiations for bilateral agreements on mutual recognition of technical standards.

34. Establish a dialogue to promote customs co-operation and the harmonisation of nomenclature, especially in the field of training, setting up databases and networks of experts, and formulating proposals for possible bilateral co-operation agreements on the subject.

35. Encourage co-operation and investment for the development of tourism in both regions. We attach special attention to the development and promotion of sustainable tourism, given the need to contribute to the conservation and management of the rich biodiversity of our regions. The active participation of local and indigenous communities, local administration and the private sector in the sustainable development of tourism contributes to regional and local economies.

36. Reinforce programmes of co-operation in the alternative-energy sector and in energy saving, especially decentralised co-operation - European Community Investment Program (ECIP), América Latina Investment (AL-INVEST), Latin America Rational Use of Energy (ALURE). We will also continue to support relevant programmes.

37. Promote programmes of co-operation in the field of infrastructure, including transport, and administrative procedures for the liberalisation of trade and the intensification of economic co-operation.

38. Ensure high-quality legal framework provisions for consumer protection and dialogue between the social partners; encourage the full implementation of international labour conventions.

In the cultural, educational, scientific, technological, social and human fields:

39. Agree to implement programmes in the areas of health and education in order to combat marginalisation, social exclusion and extreme poverty. Close attention should be paid to the implementation of the recommendations of the World Summit for Social Development of 1995 and to the preparation of the Special Session of the General Assembly in June 2000 to follow up on the Summit.

40. Strengthen co-operation in the fields of primary, secondary and higher education and design biregional programmes to support compensatory educational policies that contribute to improve the quality of education and the training of teachers, as well as the preparation of human resources, with special emphasis on vocational training and on the use of new technologies applied to education. We highlight the continuous and successful efforts in the last decades by all parties to foster co-operation also through bilingual and bicultural schools.

41. Firmly support biregional co-operation in the university sector aimed at increasing grants to students and researchers on all levels, as well as broaden post-graduate studies in science and technology, industry and business, the mobility of academics and students and for the processes of accreditation of programmes and the recognition of diplomas. We can look back on an impressive history of co-operation in the university sector, in particular the "América Latina Formación Académica" (ALFA). On both sides we have granted countless scholarships for students and researchers of all levels. These projects will be extended in the future.

42. Promote co-operation to put to better use the possibilities offered by new technologies and instruments, such as distance education, with the aim of integrating them into national education frameworks, particularly for those people and social groups that do not have access to them.

43. Special care will be given to promoting the rights of minorities and implementing training schemes which lend value to cultural and linguistic identities. We agree to promote co-operation aimed at enhancing opportunities for capacitation of indigenous populations to participate in the planning and implementation of social and economic development programmes.

44. Incorporate in educational programmes content that is oriented towards the diffusion of our tangible and intangible cultural heritage, identifying projects of co-operation between the two regions and taking into consideration the cultural offerings which exist on both sides of the Atlantic.

45. In this respect, for the purpose of lending visibility to and renewing the cultural dialogue between our regions, we will consider the establishment of a European Union-Latin America and the Caribbean cultural forum.

46. Implement programmes to promote cultural and linguistic identities, sensitising the population to their importance and to the need for their preservation. We will promote, in particular, research in the field of anthropology and culture, exchange of experts and transmission of conservation techniques.

47. Also agree to continue to provide appropriate support to community instruments such as "Urbs América Latina" (URBAL).

48. Promote the establishment of a joint initiative in the field of the "information society" on certain priority matters (e.g., electronic trade, industrial technologies and telecommunications, the environment, health, social services and education). Encourage greater co-operation in the field of audio-visual, cinematography and multimedia as well as the organisation and classification of archives and printed matter.

49. Support the work conducted by the European Union-Latin America Working Group on Scientific and Technological Co-operation and the agreements derived from the IV and V Biregional Conferences held in June and October of 1998 in Madrid and Guatemala, respectively. In this sense, we will establish a working group of representatives of both regions for dialogue and advice on the best way to derive benefit, as concerns future scientific and technical co-operation between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, from the possibilities offered in the Fifth Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities, particularly through co-operation agreements, taking into account the specifics and capacities of the countries concerned, as well as the strategic importance of this sector in our new biregional partnership.

50. Promote and facilitate initiatives for co-operation and exchange in the field of science and technology. Special attention should be paid to the ties between production processes and scientific and technological research, including the ecological aspects that bear a positive effect on the sustainable development of both regions and their environment.

51. Give continued priority to the centres of excellence through trans-regional networks comprising institutions of an academic, scientific and technological nature. Within this framework, we undertake to promote the exchange of knowledge, co-operation in joint initiatives and the mobility of students and research workers between equivalent institutions of the respective regions. We also stress the importance of inter-university co-operation in the human, social and scientific fields and the need, *inter alia*, of a focal point for common research and training of highly qualified personnel, particularly in matters relating to development and integration processes.

52. Encourage the European Institutes and Institutions for Integration (Bruges, Florence and Maastricht), and the network of academic institutions of all Latin American and Caribbean countries and the European Union Member States, to support activities relating to research, post-graduate studies and training in the field of integration processes.

53. Strengthen regional integration policies and the development of the internal markets as fundamental growth and stability factors. For this purpose, we will support the adoption of common policies and co-ordinated sectoral approaches with a view to drawing the best advantage from the existing and future policies of trade liberalisation. Special attention will be given to combating cartels and to the creation of suitable legal and fiscal frameworks.

54. Continue to support the objectives and activities of regional institutions, such as the "Centro de Formación para la Integración Regional" (CEFIR), in Montevideo, aimed at the training of professionals in the public and private sectors and of new generations, strengthening specialised capacities in fields such as analysis, training and management of integration processes.

55. In order to ensure the most efficient use of the available financial resources and to maximise existing complementarities and synergies, agree on the special importance of the principle of subsidiarity and on the need to strengthen co-operation on all sides.

INTRODUCTION

The First Summit between the Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, with the participation of the President of the European Commission, was held in the city of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, on the 28th and 29th of June 1999, under the Co-Presidency of the President of the Federative Republic of Brazil, the President of the United Mexican States and the Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany in his capacity as President of the European Council. On the basis of this First Summit and the implementation of its decisions, a Second Summit could be organised in due course.

This historic Summit was convened as a result of the political will to enhance the already excellent biregional relations based upon shared values inherited from a common history. The objective of the Summit is to strengthen the links of political, economic and cultural understanding between the two regions in order to develop a strategic partnership.

The meeting of Foreign Ministers held on the eve of the Summit also reinforced this fruitful co-operation by their substantial contribution to the biregional dialogue.

To advance this process, the Heads of State and Government decided to implement the commitments contained in this declaration through the accompanying "Priorities for Action". This will be achieved through the well-established fora of political dialogue and co-operation and through further biregional efforts.

As a result of the deliberations that took place at the Summit, the Heads of State and Government of Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union decided to adopt the following:

DECLARATION OF RIO DE JANEIRO

1. We, the Heads of State and Government of the European Union, Latin America and the Caribbean, have decided to promote and develop our relations towards a strategic biregional partnership, based upon the profound cultural heritage that unites us, and on the wealth and diversity of our respective cultural expressions. These have endowed us with strong multi-faceted identities, as well as the will to create an international environment which allows us to raise the level of the well-being of our societies and meet the principle of sustainable development,

seizing the opportunities offered by an increasingly globalised world, in a spirit of equality, respect, alliance and co-operation between our regions.

2. The strategic partnership gathers together two important actors on the current international stage. Latin America and the Caribbean is set to be one of the most flourishing regions in the 21st century as a result of important progress made in the political, economic and social spheres in recent years. For this reason, the region is determined to persevere in the advancement of democratic processes, social equality, modernisation efforts, trade liberalisation and broad-based structural reforms. The European Union, in its turn, has advanced towards a historic integration with multiple implications at the global level on political, economic, social, financial and trade matters, which has brought about constant improvement in the living standards of their societies.

3. This strategic partnership is based on full compliance with International Law, and the purposes and principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations, the principles of non-intervention, respect for sovereignty, equality among States, and self-determination are bases for the relations between our regions.

4. This partnership is built upon and will contribute to the furthering of common objectives, such as strengthening representative and participatory democracy and individual freedom, the rule of law, good governance, pluralism, international peace and security, political stability and building confidence among nations.

5. We highlight the universality of all human rights; the need to reverse environmental degradation and foster sustainable development through the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources; co-operation for the recovery, preservation, diffusion and expansion of cultural heritages; the efficient incorporation of scientific knowledge and technological advances in educational systems at all levels and the fight against poverty, as well as against social and gender inequalities.

6. We welcome the progress made in integration in Europe and Latin America and the Caribbean in the political and economic areas under the principle of open regionalism.

7. In this process we envisage providing new momentum and equal attention to the three following strategic dimensions: a fruitful political dialogue respectful of International Law; solid economic and financial relations based on a comprehensive and balanced liberalisation of trade and capital flows; and more dynamic and creative co-operation in the educational, scientific, technological, cultural, human and social fields.

8. The priorities for action adopted by the Summit will be promoted and implemented through the current ministerial discussions between the European Union and the countries and groups in Latin America, and between the European Union and Caribbean countries, in the framework of the Lome Convention. These discussions will maintain their present format and regularity. Ministerial meetings could also be held on certain matters of common interest, such as education, research, science.

9. We also decide to establish a biregional group at a Senior Official level. This group will meet regularly, monitor and encourage the achievement of the priorities for action, from a political viewpoint, and with the objective of contributing, on the basis of existing mechanisms, towards global dialogue with a view to strengthening the strategic biregional partnership in its political, economic, social, environmental, educational, cultural, technical and scientific dimensions.

In this context, we commit ourselves to:

In the political field:

10. Reinforce the existing institutional dialogues between both regions and promote direct communication between governments on matters of regional integration, in particular its political dimension, and international co-operation based on an exchange of experience and information.

11. Preserve democracy and the full and unrestricted functioning of democratic institutions, pluralism and the rule of law, by guaranteeing the holding of free, fair and open electoral processes based on universal suffrage as fundamental elements for economic and social development and strengthening of peace and stability.

12. Promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to development, taking into account their universal, interdependent and indivisible character, recognising that their promotion and protection is a responsibility of States and of all citizens. We stress that the international community has a legitimate interest in this task, under the Charter of the United Nations, with emphasis on the implementation of universal and regional human rights instruments and standards.

13. Strengthen education for peace and reject all forms of intolerance including xenophobia and racism, for the benefit of international and regional security and national development, as well as promote and protect the rights of the most vulnerable groups of society, particularly children, youth, disabled and displaced persons and migrant workers and their families.

14. Defend the principles of an independent and impartial judiciary, to promote, implement and uphold International Law and international humanitarian law. Recognise the importance of progressive development in the norms regarding the criminal responsibility of the individual who commits certain crimes of international repercussion. For this reason, we note with interest the recent approval of the Constitutive Statute of the International Criminal Court.

15. Reaffirm full gender equality as an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of all human rights and fundamental freedoms, thus committing ourselves to incorporate a gender perspective into the public policies of our governments.

16. Promote and protect the rights of indigenous populations, including their right to equally participate in and enjoy the opportunities and benefits of political, economic and social development, with full respect for their identities, cultures and traditions.

17. Intensify efforts to meet the needs of present and future generations through the adoption and fulfilment of sustainable development strategies, making compatible economic growth, environmental protection and social progress.

18. Give priority to overcoming poverty, marginalisation and social exclusion, within the framework of sustainable development promotion, as well as to modify patterns of production and consumption, to promote conservation of biological diversity and the global ecosystem, the sustainable use of natural resources and to prevent and reverse environmental degradation, especially that arising from excessive industrial concentration and inadequate patterns of consumption, the destruction of forests and erosion of the soils, as well as the depletion of the ozone layer and the increasing greenhouse effect, which threaten the world climate.

19. National and regional efforts in these fields, combined with international co-operation, will promote the right of individuals to a better quality of life and incorporate the whole population in the processes of economic and social development.

20. Recognise that, in the majority of countries, there is insufficient availability of internal resources to implement the range of the actions being proposed internationally to promote sustainable development. As such, we stress the need to promote adequate levels of investment and technology transfer.

21. Underline the importance of the contribution of new actors, partners and resources from civil society with the objective of consolidating democracy, social and economic development and deepening respect for human rights. International co-operation involving public resources requires a dialogue in which both governments and civil society participate. Development co-operation partners will have to comply with the laws of the countries involved, as well as with transparency and accountability. We will encourage exchange and co-operation of civil society between Latin America, the Caribbean and the European Union.

22. Work together to confront the threats to international peace and security and intensify efforts to continue the disarmament process under strict and effective international control, with emphasis on the elimination of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear, chemical and biological weapons. In the framework of the Disarmament Agenda, we consider that, after entry into force of the convention of the prohibition of chemical weapons, one of the main objectives is the conclusion and adoption of the verification protocol of the convention on the prohibition of biological weapons, leading to eradicate this category of mass destruction weapons.

23. Attach special importance to achieving universal adherence to the Treaty of the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons, to fight against excessive and destabilising accumulation of small arms and light weapons, and their uncontrolled dissemination, and call upon all States to join efforts to achieve the total elimination of anti-personnel landmines.

24. Tackle the global drug problem under the principle of common and shared responsibility based on a global, comprehensive and balanced approach in full conformity with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and International Law. The Panama Comprehensive Action Plan on Drugs is based on these principles and will give a new dimension to co-operation on drugs. The Co-ordination and Co-operation Mechanism between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean should be used to develop this co-operation.

25. Also express our will to fulfil and to follow-up on the agreements reached at the XX Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly Dedicated to Common Action to Counter the Problem of Drugs.

26. Join efforts to combat all forms of organised transnational crime and related activities, such as money laundering, trafficking of women, children and migrants; the illegal manufacture and trade of firearms, munitions and other related materials.

27. Reinforce individual and joint actions against terrorism in all forms and manifestations, since the latter erodes peace, the rule of law and democracy.

28. Strengthen individual and joint actions and increase collaboration among our Governments to face corruption in all its forms, taking into account the important instruments recently adopted in both regions, since this serious problem erodes the legitimacy and functioning of institutions and represents a threat to democracy, society, the rule of law and development.

29. Join efforts to increase dialogue, international co-operation and the exchange of knowledge in the prevention of natural disasters, while taking advantage of experience gained through the United Nations International Decade for Natural Disaster Reduction. Moreover, initiatives in this field should consider the links between prompt emergency aid, rehabilitation and reconstruction, while observing criteria for long-term sustainable development.

30. In this context, acknowledge the efforts undertaken by the Governments and people of Central America for the reconstruction and transformation of their countries after the tragedy of hurricane "Mitch". We also attach great significance to international co-operation for the relief and reconstruction of Central America, in particular to contributions from Latin American and Caribbean countries, and to the successful implementation of the European Union plan for reconstruction of Central America, as well as to the efforts of the European Union Member States, amounting together to more than one billion euros.

31. Strengthen multilateral institutions, particularly as fora for international dispute resolution and the promotion of development. In this regard, we jointly support intensifying multilateral relations, including advancing the process of reforming the United Nations system, in the search for a new balance between its principal organs, so as to improve their effectiveness.

In the economic field:

32. Enhance international economic co-operation, to promote a comprehensive and mutually beneficial liberalisation of trade, as a means of increasing prosperity and of combating the destabilising effects of volatile financial flows. In this context, the asymmetries in development level shall be taken into account.

33. Reaffirm our conviction that regional integration plays an important role in growth promotion, trade liberalisation, economic and social development, democratic stability and a more symmetrical inclusion in the process of globalisation. We particularly stress our willingness to strengthen the multilateral trade system, open regionalism, and intensify economic relations between our regions.

34. Recognise the shared responsibility for an effective and result-oriented contribution to all these aspects.

Through our new interregional partnership we resolve in particular to:

35. Join our efforts to guarantee the complete and timely entry into force, and effective application of the Uruguay Round commitments.

36. Highlight the importance of the World Trade Organisation as the main forum to promote trade liberalisation and the establishment of basic rules and guidelines for the international trade system.

37. Jointly propose, at the next WTO Ministerial meeting, to launch a new round of comprehensive trade negotiations without excluding any area, directed towards the reduction of tariff and non-tariff barriers to trade in goods and services.

38. Reiterate our firm rejection of all measures of a unilateral character and with extraterritorial effect, which are contrary to International Law and the commonly accepted rules of free trade. We agree that this type of practice poses a serious threat to multilateralism.

39. Promote further development and diversification of trade, taking into account ongoing and future multilateral and bilateral negotiations for the liberalisation of trade, such as in the case of the European Union with Mexico, Mercosul and Chile, as well as future developments in our regions.

40. Promote dialogue on and stimulate a favourable climate for financial flows and for productive investment between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, in particular the promotion of joint ventures, through the European Investment Bank (EIB), as well as of other co-operation instruments, such as bilateral investment promotion and reciprocal protection agreements.

41. Provide special attention and support for countries with smaller economies, including through incentives for productive investment. Favourable financing conditions and measures should be examined and implemented to provide a fair and adequate treatment to highly indebted poor countries in the specific and competent fora. In this regard, we welcome the agreement by the G7 Heads of State and Government of a new package of debt relief measures for the highly indebted poor countries.

42. Promote greater contact between economic agents and to encourage an enlarged dialogue between the members of the business community and sectoral fora on both sides, which are important for the relations between our regions, and in particular for sustained economic and social development.

43. Promote co-operation in science and technology in order to strengthen national capabilities in these areas and contribute to efforts, to tackle global problems; to encourage investment and business partnerships involving the transfer of technologies and know-how.

44. Support the strengthening and enforcement of intellectual property rights in all areas as an important condition for enhancing trade and investment flows.

45. Promote, in the context of globalisation and the progress of the information society, trade in services and to support new forms of co-operation in this field as important factors for closer economic ties between both regions.

46. Encourage technology transfer in order to improve the processes and standards of economic links between the European Union and Latin America and the Caribbean in the fields of the production of goods, foreign trade, port infrastructure, and telecommunications and transport.

47. Promote a favourable climate for small and medium enterprises whose role is important in the context of the development of stable market economies, for the furthering of economic exchanges and for the implementation of joint ventures between the two regions.

48. Underline the decisive role of efficient infrastructure, including transport, and administrative procedures for the liberalisation of trade and the intensification of economic co-operation.

49. Strengthen our partnership in development co-operation, which offers an important opportunity to put the shared values and ideals into practice and to mutual benefit.

50. Actively participate, in view of the seriousness and recurrence of financial crises and the severity of their impacts at national and international levels, in the design of a new international financial architecture, to allow both regions to obtain the full benefits of capital markets integration and reduce the risks involved with their volatility.

51. Continue strengthening the financial systems of our countries and to develop regulation and monitoring mechanisms, in order to implement international best standards and practices. This will contribute to establishing a dynamic, stable, international economic and financial

system. Such a system will ensure the prevention of future crises or, should they occur, assure their early identification and their rapid and effective solution so as to contain their spread.

52. Acknowledge that the introduction of the euro does contribute to strengthen our biregional economic and financial ties as well as the international monetary and financial system, and provide it with stability and dynamism.

53. Promote the active participation of our Governments in the consultations taking place at the United Nations on current trends in global financial flows. Joint efforts to reform the international financial system, as well as to define and to implement an agenda for international financial stability, which includes monitoring the global financial system for crisis prevention.

In the cultural, educational, scientific, technological, social and human fields:

54. Reiterate our commitment towards the establishment of a solid partnership between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union in the educational, cultural and human spheres, based on shared values and on the recognition of the importance of education for achieving social equality and scientific and technological progress. We also commit ourselves to conduct our relationships on the basis of the principles of equality and respect for plurality and diversity, without distinction of race, religion or gender, precepts that constitute the ideal means of achieving an open, tolerant and inclusive society where the individual's right to freedom and mutual respect is enshrined through equitable access to productive capacity, health, education and civil protection.

55. Agree that there is no better investment than developing human resources, which is both a commitment to social justice and a requirement for long-term economic growth.

56. Assign more resources to address the just and urgent social demands and to improve the scope and quality of our social programs.

57. Intend to share experiences between our two regions on diverse social policies that we apply so as to strengthen co-operation in this area, particularly in health, nutrition, education and employment.

58. Also stress the importance of creation of sufficient and well-paid and productive employment in our countries. For this purpose, education and professional training of workers of all ages is essential.

In particular, we agree to:

59. Promote the recuperation, preservation and a better knowledge of our vast cultural heritages, including patrimony, and of our diversity as a fundamental link of integration between Latin America and the Caribbean and the European Union, permitting closer and more enduring relations between our peoples and promoting cultural creativity as a dialogue for peace and tolerance.

60. Foster actions, in both regions as well as in multilateral fora, to promote cultural diversity and pluralism in the world.

61. Encourage interregional exchanges among educational and cultural actors as one of the most efficient and effective means to promote mutual understanding, learning and cultural production. The promotion of close contacts between artists and organisation in all cultural sectors will encourage respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, guaranteeing human dignity and social development.

62. Encourage further co-operation and exchange between cultural industries as well as in the audio-visual sector as major pillars in the cultural and economic co-operation, meeting an increased interest in high quality productions.

63. Consider the strengthening of educational co-operation as a special challenge, with particular emphasis on basic education, vocational training and co-operation between higher education institutions, including universities, and distance education, and take into account the particular needs of our societies. In this context we recall the successful co-operation programmes already in existence.

64. Promote universal access to education and professional training as determining factors for diminishing social inequalities, reducing poverty and achieving better paid employment, assuring a full basic education for all people of school age and the right of peoples to maintain their cultural and linguistic identity; we stress the right to education itself, based on the specific national responsibility of each country to provide adequate education to all its citizens.

65. Promote scientific research and technical development as fundamental elements in our relations and as an essential condition for the successful insertion of countries in a globalised world, which requires the advances of scientific knowledge, its mastery and adaptation to constantly evolving technology.

66. Favour innovation and technology transfer in order to obtain greater economic and technical linkage between the two regions in the fields of production of goods and services, foreign trade, infrastructure, and telecommunications and transport, among others.

67. Welcome the various events promoted before and during the Summit involving different sectors of civil society

68. These solemn commitments guide our current dialogue and our co-operation in inter-regional and international fora. At the same time, they contribute to the successful establishment of our strategic partnership.

69. The participants expressed their profound gratitude to the people and Government of Brazil for the courtesy and support received in carrying the work of the Summit through to a successful conclusion.